

MEMO:

I.C. 74-1333

Re: ALGER HISS

At 11:00 AM on August 3, 1948, a hearing was in progress in the offices of the Committee on Ways and Means in the new office building, Washington, D.C. The following colloquy took place:

"Mr. Stripling: Mr. Chambers, are you before the Committee in response to a subpoena that was served on you yesterday?

"Mr. Chambers: I am.

"Mr. Stripling: Will you state your full name.

"Mr. Chambers: David Whittaker Chambers.

"Mr. Stripling: What is your present address?

"Mr. Chambers: 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City.

"Mr. Stripling: What is your present occupation?

"Mr. Chambers: I am a senior editor of Time Magazine.

"Mr. Stripling: Where and when were you born?

"Mr. Chambers: I was born April 1, 1901, in Philadelphia.

"Mr. Stripling: How long have you been associated with Time Magazine?

TGS:MMcM
65-14920

Kisseloff-23367

4759

"Mr. Chambers: Nine years.

"Mr. Stripling: Prior to that what was your occupation?

"Mr. Chambers: I was a member of the Communist Party and a paid functionary of the Party.

"Mr. Stripling: When did you join the Communist Party?

"Mr. Chambers: 1924.

"Mr. Stripling: How long did you remain a member of the Communist Party?

"Mr. Chambers: Until 1937."

Somewhat later in the interrogation Mr. Chambers asked for, and received, permission to read a prepared statement. In this prepared statement he outlined the activities of an underground Communist Party apparatus that was operating in the City of Washington, D.C., during the years 1935, 1936, and 1937. Among persons he named as being members of this apparatus was Alger Hiss.

* * * * *

On August 5, 1948, the following colloquy took place in the same hearing room in the form of sworn testimony of Alger Hiss:

"Mr. Rankin: Will you please give your age and place of birth?

"Mr. Hiss: I was born in Baltimore, Maryland, on November 11, 1904.

Kisseloff-23368

"I am here at my own request to deny unqualifiedly various statements about me which were made before this Committee by one Whittaker Chambers the day before yesterday. I appreciate the Committee's having promptly granted my request. I welcome the opportunity to answer to the best of my ability any inquiries members of this Committee may wish to ask me. I am not, and never have been, a member of the Communist Party. I do not and never have adhered to the tenets of the Communist Party. I am not, and never have been, a member of any Communist front organization. I have never followed the Communist Party line directly or indirectly. To the best of my knowledge none of my friends is a Communist."

Thus began one of the most publicized controversies of recent time. The case of the U.S. vs. Alger Hiss ran through two lengthy trials, the first one beginning May 31, 1949, and ending July 10, 1949, in a disagreement, eight of the jurors voting for conviction and four for acquittal.

Kisseloff-23369

The second trial began November 17, 1949, and ended January 20, 1950, in the conviction of Alger Hiss for the crime of perjury.

On January 25, 1950, Alger Hiss appeared before the Honorable Henry J. Goddard in the Southern District of New York, and he was on this day sentenced to five years imprisonment on each of two counts of an indictment, said sentence to run concurrently. On the same day, he was released on bail in the amount of \$10,000. pending appeal. Following his conviction his attorneys made an appeal of the lower court's decision to the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, Second Circuit.

On December 7, 1950, the Honorable Harie Chase, Augustus Hand, and Thomas Swan, sitting in the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, Second Circuit, New York City, unanimously upheld the conviction of the lower court. Thereafter Hiss' lawyers sought a writ of certiorari before the United States Supreme Court. On March 12, 1951, their petition for certiorari was denied, and on March 22, 1951 Alger Hiss surrendered to the District Court for the Southern District of New York to commence serving his sentence.

The testimony of Whittaker Chambers as previously set forth was augmented by considerable additional testimony

Kisseloff-23370

by Chambers before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in which he outlined in great detail his activities in a Communist Party underground apparatus in Washington, in particular his activities and close personal association with Alger Hiss, a member of this Communist Party apparatus. In his testimony before the House Committee, Chambers related in detail the close relationship that existed between the Hiss family and the Chambers family during a period from 1935 to early 1938. In contrast, the testimony of Alger Hiss during his first appearances before the Committee took the form of a complete denial of, knowledge of, or friendship with, Whittaker Chambers. As a result of the affirmative statements of Whittaker Chambers and the negative replies of Alger Hiss insofar as the association of these two individuals was concerned, a confrontation was arranged.

On the evening of August 17, 1948, Hiss and Chambers met at the Commodore Hotel, New York City, and after some discussion between the two men, Alger Hiss positively identified Chambers as one George Crosley whom he had casually known in Washington in 1935 as a free lance writer doing research on the munitions industry. At the time of the confrontation Hiss still denied being a member of the Communist Party and challenged Chambers to make this statement outside of the immunity ~~dissemination~~ ^{off-2837} the halls of Congress.

On August 27, 1948, Whittaker Chambers appeared as a guest on the radio program "Meet the Press" over Station WOL in Washington, D.C. During this program he was interviewed concerning his association with Alger Hiss, and while on this program accused Alger Hiss of having been a member of the Communist Party.

In October of 1948 Alger Hiss, through his counsel, William Marbury, filed a slander-libel action in the Federal District Court at Baltimore, Maryland, charging Chambers with damages in the amount of \$75,000. as a result of the latter's statement on the radio charging him with being a Communist.

On November 14, 1948, during the course of a pre-trial examination of Chambers in connection with the slander-libel suit in Baltimore, the latter produced four handwritten notes and 65 typewritten pages of documents which Chambers said he had received from Alger Hiss in 1938. All of these papers Chambers claimed contained material from the files of the State Department which had been obtained by Alger Hiss and turned over to Chambers.

An examination of these documents by both counsel for Chambers and Hiss indicated a strong probability that they were paraphrasings or verbatim copies of confidential

Kisseloff-23372

official State Department documents. By agreement of counsel, and by order of United States District Judge Chestnut of Baltimore, the documents were turned over to the United States Department of Justice. Chambers, at the time he turned these documents over, testified he had received them from Alger Hiss and that they were eventually to be given by Chambers to Colonel Boris Bykov. Colonel Bykov, according to Chambers, was a Russian-born Soviet agent operating in the United States and was Chambers' superior. On November 24, 1948, the Department of Justice turned these documents over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and requested an immediate investigation of this matter. These documents were examined by the FBI Laboratory and it was definitely determined that the typed impressions were made by a Woodstock typewriter.

On December 4, 1948, Alger Hiss was interviewed by agents of the Baltimore Office. He denied ever having given official State Department documents to Chambers or any other unauthorized person. He examined the typewritten documents and related that they appeared to be authentic copies or summaries of official State Department material. He readily admitted the four handwritten notes were in his handwriting. With respect to any typewriters owned by the Hiss family, he said that at one time there was an old-fashioned

machine in his home, "possibly an Underwood". This machine, he said, was given to his wife, Priscilla, by the latter's father, Thomas Fansler, who had been in the insurance business in Philadelphia. He said Mrs. Hiss disposed of this typewriter by selling it to either a second-hand typewriter concern or a second-hand dealer in Washington, D.C., some time subsequent to 1938. Immediately thereafter agents of the Washington Field Office canvassed all second-hand typewriter dealers in Washington who had been in business since 1937. No record of the purchase or sale of this typewriter was found.

It was not until the beginning of the first trial on May 31, 1949, that the all-important Woodstock typewriter showed up. It was produced in Court by Edward McLean, one of the Hiss attorneys. This typewriter had not been disposed of in the manner described by Hiss in December of 1948, but actually had been given to one of the Catlett brothers, who used to do odd jobs for the Hiss family in 1938.

The disposal of this typewriter, together with the events leading to its being offered in evidence at the trial, was one of the more important aspects of this case. The failure by the FBI to locate this typewriter accelerated their efforts to attempt to identify the typing on these

Kisseloff-23374

documents with a typewriter owned by the Hisses. If the Hisses had been the owners of the typewriter which was used to prepare the 65 questioned documents, it followed that in all probability they had also prepared other documents on the same machine which could be identified as having originated from it. The big question was where would these documents be located.

Priscilla Hiss was a graduate of Bryn Mawr University in Pennsylvania. She had also been an officer of the university alumni association. Inquiry at the college failed to produce any typewritten letters or other memoranda that Mrs. Hiss might have directed to the college. However, inquiry of the Bryn Mawr Alumni Association produced more concrete results. An alumni report dated May, 1937, prepared by Priscilla Hiss was located.

Priscilla Hiss had attended the University of Maryland in the Summer of 1937. Inquiry at this institution produced a typewritten letter from Mrs. Hiss dated May 25, 1937.

Timothy Hobson, Alger Hiss' stepson, had attended the Landon School at Bethesda, Maryland. Inquiry here by agents of the FBI uncovered a typewritten letter dated December 9, 1936, to the Headmaster and signed by Alger Hiss.

Kisseloff-23375

These letters were examined by the FBI Laboratory.

The document examiners reached the definite conclusion that the typewriting appearing on the Landon School letter, the Bryn Mawr report, and the University of Maryland letter, was prepared on the same typewriter that was used to prepare the 65 questioned documents that were turned over by Chambers in the Baltimore disposition.

On December 2, 1948, in response to a subpoena served by the House Committee on Un-American Activities, Chambers produced the now famous pumpkin papers. They consisted of two short strips of developed microfilm containing photographs of original State Department documents and three rolls of undeveloped film. Chambers claimed he placed these microfilms in a hollowed-out pumpkin as he believed this to be an excellent hiding place for the material he thought was of great value.

During December of 1948 Alger Hiss and Whittaker Chambers appeared before a Federal Grand Jury in New York City. This Grand Jury was hearing witnesses in connection with possible violations of the espionage laws of the United States and other related Federal criminal statutes. Special Agents of the FBI as well as a score of other witnesses gave testimony to this Grand Jury. On December 15 this Grand Jury handed up to Judge John W. Clancy of the Southern District of

New York a true bill in two counts charging in one count, that Hiss' testimony was untrue when he stated before the Grand Jury that while he was employed in the Department of State in the months of February and March, 1938, he did not furnish, deliver, or transmit to Chambers, not a person authorized to receive such, copies of numerous secret, confidential and restricted documents, writings, notes, and other papers, the originals of which had theretofore been removed and abstracted from the possession and custody of the Department of State in violation of law; count two, that the testimony of Alger Hiss was untrue when he stated that he did not, in fact, see and converse with Chambers in or about the months of February and March, 1938, in violation of a Federal statute.

On December 16, 1948, Hiss appeared in Federal Court before the Honorable John W. Clancy and pleaded not guilty to both of the above counts in the indictment. Bond was fixed in the amount of \$5,000. which was immediately furnished.

On May 31, 1949, the trial of Alger Hiss was commenced before Federal Judge Samuel H. Kaufman in the Southern District of New York, and thus started one of the most publicized trials of recent times. This trial received press coverage not only from all of the ~~newspapers~~ ^{Kisseloff 2337} newspapers of

the United States, but representatives of the European press as well were in attendance at both this and the second trial.

One of the many facets of this investigation was the exhaustive interviews with Whittaker Chambers. Beginning shortly after the indictment, and continuing through April of 1949, Chambers was interviewed for approximately six to seven hours a day, each day of the week exclusive of Sunday. His background from the time he could first remember it was gone into in minute detail -- his early life, his college days, his membership in the Communist Party, his leaving the Party at the time of the Stalinist-Lovestonite quarrel, his reentering the Party actively again in 1933, his first days in the underground, his acquaintanceship with J. Peters in New York and Washington, his development of the Washington apparatus, his new superior, Boris Bykov, his meeting with Alger Hiss, every detail of his social life as it pertained to the Hisses and the Chambers, his method of operation, the meetings with Alger Hiss on 28th Street, on P Street, and on Volta Place, where he received State Department documents from Alger or Priscilla, the method he used in photographing these documents, those who had assisted him, the identity of his assistants, the various residences that were used as photographic studios for these operations, his association with Franklin and Victor Perlo, Harry Dexter

White, Vincent Reno, William and George Pigman, David Carpenter -- each single small bit of evidence gone into in the most minute detail, so that at the conclusion of these interviews there were hundreds of pages of factual information as recalled by Whittaker Chambers. As he brought to light each new bit of information agents in the various cities where a particular situation took place immediately started to check it out and verify it. It was a long, hard, time-consuming job, but it was just one phase of the work of the FBI in connection with this important case.

Of utmost importance was the obtaining and identifying of persons who might have seen Chambers and Hiss together during 1935, 1936 and 1937. Because of the obvious secret nature of their work, the only ones who had ever seen Chambers and Hiss together other than their respective wives were three colored maids. Two of these maids were maids of the Hisses. One was the maid of the Chambers when they lived in Baltimore. Claudie Catlett, one of the Hiss maids, was located, but she only recalled having seen Chambers on one occasion when Alger Hiss was not present in the Hiss household.

EDITH MURRAY

Again during the lengthy interview with Chambers he pointed out that while he was living in Baltimore both Alger and Priscilla Hiss had visited the Chambers on several

Kisseloff-23379

occasions. He quite definitely recalled that at least on some of these visits the Chambers' colored maid, Edith, was in the house. Unfortunately Chambers was unable to give much of a description of this woman, but did recall some sketchy information about her husband. This information about the maid, Edith, was obtained in January of 1949, and from that time until just before the second trial in November of 1949 efforts to locate this woman were futile. A systematic survey had been made of all employment agencies in Baltimore supplying domestic service during the period of 1935, 1936 and 1937, and an attempt was made to identify and interview all women applicants who had the first name Edith. This met with no success. The colored maids of people in the vicinity of the Chambers' home in Baltimore were interviewed, but they could furnish no leads as to the identity of the unknown Edith.

During the Summer of 1949, between the two trials of Alger Hiss, Agents of the Baltimore Office decided to interview Mr. and Mrs. Chambers again in a possible effort to obtain new leads on the maid. This interview took place at the Chambers farm in Westminster, Maryland. After some conversation, Mrs. Chambers suddenly recalled that at one time she had painted a portrait of Edith. A search of the Chambers attic resulted in finding this portrait. Photographs of this portrait were made, and again systematic interviews

of persons in Baltimore who might identify Edith were conducted and the photograph displayed to them. One of these individuals recognized this photograph, and was subsequently able to procure Edith's current address. One of the agents of the Baltimore Office called at this address, and noting the similarity of the woman who answered the door with the person depicted in the photograph, did not immediately identify himself as an agent of the FBI, but took the photograph out of his pocket, showed it to this woman, and asked her who she thought it might be. Edith replied, "Why, that's me."

Subsequent detailed interviews with her revealed that she was Edith Murray who had been the maid at the Chambers home on Eutaw Place in Baltimore and knew the Chambers while she was working for them as the Cantwells. During the interviews she was shown a photograph of Alger and Priscilla Hiss and definitely identified the photograph of Priscilla Hiss as one of Mrs. Chambers' Washington friends. She tentatively identified a photograph of Alger Hiss as this woman's husband.

At the inception of the second Alger Hiss trial,

Kisseloff-23381

Edith Murray was placed in the lobby of the United States Court House in New York City and instructed to observe all persons entering the court room to determine if she could pick out from these people the couple who had visited the Chambers at Baltimore. As Mr. and Mrs. Hiss stepped from an elevator, Edith Murray immediately made an unquestionable identification of them.

She subsequently appeared at the trial and was probably one of the most important Government witnesses. Both Alger and Priscilla Hiss had steadfastly claimed on the witness stand in both trials that they had only seen Mr. and Mrs. Chambers a few times and on those occasions the meetings were in Washington, D.C. They categorically denied that they had ever seen them anywhere else.

After Edith Murray was sworn, Tom Murphy, then Government counsel, asked her a few questions about her background, about her work with the Chambers family, and whether the Chambers family had any visitors. She testified that the Chambers had very few visitors. Murphy then rather dramatically asked if she could identify any persons she had seen in the Chambers home in Baltimore that might be presently in the court room. She stood up on the witness stand, looked around the court room, and then said, "There is the lady right there with the black hat with the thing on the side." She had identified Priscilla Hiss. She was then

asked if she would be able to identify the latter's husband and she replied, "Yes, I couldn't help but remember him." She thereafter pointed out Alger Hiss for the judge and jury.

In the course of her testimony Edith Murray recalled one instance where Priscilla Hiss came down from Washington to stay over night with the small Chambers child. She testified that Mrs. Chambers was pregnant at the time and had to go to New York City to see her doctor. Since Edith finished her work at around eight o'clock in the evening, it would of course necessitate someone staying at the house to mind the small child. She recalled a conversation she had with Mrs. Hiss while she was giving the baby a bath. She remembered that Mrs. Hiss stated she too had a small child whose name was Timmy. She recalled another occasion when Mr. and Mrs. Hiss came to the Chambers residence for dinner. She remembered serving the dinner and remarked that there seemed to be such a great difference between the two families. She testified that Mr. and Mrs. Chambers were not too well dressed while Mr. and Mrs. Hiss appeared to be fashionably dressed. She was cross-examined by Mr. Cross at length, but she remained calm and collected and was unshaken in her testimony.

THE FIRST TRIAL

On May 31, 1949, the first trial of Alger Hiss
Kisseloff-23383
began in the United States Court House on Foley Square.

The trial judge was the Honorable Samuel H. Kaufman. The defendant Alger Hiss had as his principal counsel Lloyd Paul Stryker, a well-known New York attorney. He was assisted by attorneys Harold Shapiro, Edward McLean, Robert Von Mehrens, and Harold Rosenwald. The Government was represented by Thomas F. Murphy, then the head of the Criminal Division of the United States Attorney's Office in New York City and who is presently the Commissioner of Police for the City of New York, Assistant United States Attorney Clark S. Ryan, and Special Assistant to the Attorney General Thomas J. Donegan. The direct and cross-examination of Whittaker Chambers and his wife took approximately eleven days. The direct and cross-examination of Alger and Priscilla Hiss took approximately seven days.

The trial was concluded July 10, 1949, in a disagreement of the jurors. Following the foreman's statement that the jury was in disagreement the jury was polled by Attorney McLean and it was found that eight of the jurors had been for conviction of Hiss and four for his acquittal.

THE SECOND TRIAL

The second trial of Alger Hiss also took place in the United States Court House at Foley Square, New York, and was presided over by the Honorable Henry W. Goddard. It began November 17, 1949. The attorneys for Alger Hiss were the same as in the first trial except that Claude Cross replaced

Lloyd Paul Stryker as principal counsel. The Government again was represented by Thomas F. Murphy, Clark S. Ryan and Thomas J. Donegan. This trial, as well as the first, was covered by approximately sixty representatives of the press.

In the first trial an attempt by the defense was made to allow Dr. Carl Binger, a psychiatrist, to testify but his testimony was not allowed. In the second trial, however, Dr. Binger did testify. His testimony in summary was that from his observation of Chambers while on the witness stand, as well as a study of all of his writings and a study of Chambers' testimony in the Baltimore depositions, he concluded that Chambers had a "psychopathic personality". Binger admitted that this classification of mental ailment did not indicate that Chambers was psychotic in that he should be admitted to an insane institution but that it was a mental ailment bordering on the neurotic.

Also at this trial a psychologist testified. He was Harvard-trained John Murray. He testified that he, too, had read all of Chambers writings and he came to the similar conclusion as did Dr. Binger that Chambers was a psychopathic personality. Although Murray steadfastly maintained that he had used only Chambers' writings and a lengthy hypothetical question as the basis of his conclusion, ^{Kisseloff-23385} he was, under cross-

examination, forced to admit that prior to making a study of Chambers' writings he had made a "private investigation" and had talked to a former co-worker of Chambers, and had asked this individual many leading questions in an effort to determine if Chambers was sloppy in his dress, egotistical, prejudiced, irresponsible, honest, etc.

THE MICROFILM

Of prime importance was the determination of the date that the pumpkin paper microfilm was manufactured. One of the strips was the product of the Eastman Kodak Company. Experts from the Eastman Kodak Company testified that the serial number on the microfilm indicated this particular film was manufactured and sold in 1937. The film manufactured by the DuPont Company was a bit of a problem. The DuPont people related that the number appearing on that particular strip of film indicated that that film was manufactured and sold by the DuPont concern in either 1936 or 1944. No positive testimony could be given because apparently there had been an error in using this number for two different years.

THE FOUR BOKHARA RUGS

During the interview with Chambers he related that in 1936 Colonel Bykov became his superior and he explained the Washington apparatus ^{Kisseloff-23386} Setup to him. Bykov

appeared pleased and felt that the Washington apparatus of which Alger Hiss was a member could be more productive. He suggested to Chambers that possibly a gift of money might induce them to procure more documents and better information. Chambers vetoed this, saying that this might be insulting to them. Bykov then suggested that possibly the four best sources, Alger Hiss, A. George Silverman, Harry Dexter White and Henry Julian Wadleigh might be given a rather expensive gift. Chambers agreed. Bykov suggested giving each of the three an expensive rug. He gave Chambers \$800.00 for this purchase. Chambers then went to his good friend, Meyer Shapiro, who was a professor of fine arts at Columbia University, for some suggestions. Shapiro suggested Bokhara rugs, and Chambers then gave Shapiro the money and suggested he make the purchase. Shapiro went to the Massachusetts Importing Company and purchased four Bokhara rugs for about \$900.00. These rugs at Chambers suggestion were delivered to Shapiro in New York, who in turn sent them by American Railway Express to A. George Silverman in Washington, D.C.

A check of the records at the rug concern revealed that four such Bokhara rugs were billed to Meyer Shapiro, and a notation appeared on this bill DELIVERED DECEMBER 29, 1936 in New York City. The actual delivery in Washington could

Kisseloff-23387

not be ascertained in view of the fact that the records that far back had been destroyed. Oddly enough, Silverman, who was most uncooperative, refused to state whether he had received such a rug. But Henry Julian Wadleigh readily admitted the receipt of this rug, and had it in his possession at the time he was interviewed. Strangely too, Alger Hiss admitted having such a rug, and also the fact that he received it from Chambers. Hiss' story, however, was that Chambers had received this rug from a patron, had no use for it, and gave it to Hiss. Hiss related that he felt this was "payment in kind" for small sums of money that Hiss had advanced to Chambers and which had not been repaid.

THE FORD AUTOMOBILES

Two Ford automobiles figured quite prominently in this case. One was a 1929 Ford roadster which, as Hiss testified before the House Committee, had a "sassy little trunk on the back". Hiss related both before the House Committee and at each of his trials that in the Spring of 1935 he met Chambers, a free lance writer. This first meeting took place in the offices of the Nye Committee, the Committee that was then investigating the munitions industry. After seeing Chambers a few times the latter indicated he was desirous of moving to Washington until he had completed his press assignment. Hiss, almost a stranger to Chambers, stated

Kisseloff-23388

that he offered to allow Chambers to live in his P Street house until the expiration of a lease which had two months to run, inasmuch as he, Hiss, had moved to a new residence. He claimed that Chambers complained of the difficulty he experienced in getting around Washington by public conveyances and then out of almost sheer generosity, Alger offered him the use of this 1929 Ford since he, Hiss, had just purchased a "floor model" Plymouth sedan. Some months later, after Chambers had used this car a good bit, Hiss, according to Chambers, stated that since the car had only about a \$25.00 resale value, it might be put to better advantage if it were given to some poor Communist organizer in the South. Some time thereafter Hiss told Chambers that he had so disposed of the Ford automobile.

Thus began another series of checks and rechecks among the various used automobile dealers in Washington, D.C. This met with success. A record was found in the offices of the Cherner Motor Company in Washington indicating that a 1929 Ford automobile had been purchased by the Cherner Motor Company from Alger Hiss. On this certificate of sale appeared a notation that this automobile had been assigned by the Cherner Motor Company to William Fosen, 5405 13th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Kisseloff-23389

William Rosen was a reluctant witness. He refused to testify before the Grand Jury and in the second trial of this case investigation showed that William Rosen had not actually resided in Washington, D.C., at the time this title was assigned to him.

In October of 1937 Chambers had definitely made up his mind to break with the Communist Party. He figured, however, since he had been so enmeshed in the inner workings of the Party and the underground and knew its top leaders, that if he defected he might be assassinated or irreparable damage might be done to his wife and children. He decided that after he quit he would travel to Florida and go in hiding. At this time he had a second-hand Ford which had been given to him by the Party. It was not in good shape and Chambers wanted a new automobile. He went to Alger Hiss and told him that he had been informed by his superiors to buy a new automobile, but that the money for it would not be forthcoming for some months. He asked Hiss if he could borrow \$400.00. According to Chambers, Hiss gave him the \$400.00, and with the proceeds of the sale of the second hand car, his wife, Esther, went to the Schmidt Motor Car Company in Randallstown, Maryland, and purchased a new 1937 Ford automobile. Hiss denied ever giving this \$400.00 to Chambers. A check of the bank records at the Riggs National Bank, where Alger and Priscilla had a

joint savings account, reflected that on November 19, 1937 a withdrawal of \$400.00 was made from this account.

As a further indication of the veracity of Chambers' statement with regard to the purchase of this Ford, the records of the Smith Motor Car Company reflect that the purchase of the Ford car was made on November 23, 1937. According to the records of the Smith Motor Car Company, a 1937 Ford was sold to Esther Chambers on this date. Payment for it was in the form of a trade in of a 1934 Ford sedan and \$486.75 in cash.

THE TYPING EXAMINATION

During Chambers' interview he related that in the initial stages of his operations with Alger Hiss when the latter was employed in the State Department, Hiss would bring home four, five or six documents which he thought were important, about once every two weeks. By pre-arrangement Chambers would go to the Hiss household, obtain the documents, take them to Baltimore, have them photographed, and return them late that night or early the next morning. Colonel Bykov, in commenting upon the importance of these documents, told Chambers that some system would have to be devised whereby the quantity of these documents would be increased. Chambers stated that he talked over this matter with Alger and Priscilla Hiss and it was arranged that Hiss would bring home every night,

if possible, a few documents, and the next day Priscilla Hiss would type up copies or summaries and on the succeeding day Hiss would return the originals to the State Department. In this manner, when Chambers made his fortnightly visits to the Hiss home, he would receive a quantity of typed documents rather than just a few originals. He would take these to Baltimore, where they would be photographed, the typed documents would be destroyed, and the developed or undeveloped negative would be turned over to Bykov in New York City by Chambers.

When interviewed Priscilla Hiss disclaimed any proficiency in typing, and Alger himself said that Mrs. Hiss was not a typist. Again a search of records to determine whether this was a fact or not. Priscilla Hiss was known to have attended Columbia University. A check of the records at that school showed that on January 15, 1927 Priscilla Hiss passed an examination in typewriting and English. This was just another bit of evidence that took a great deal of doing to get but which was helpful to the Government at the trial of this case.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY

During the time Priscilla Hiss was interrogated by FBI agents, and at both trials, she steadfastly maintained that she had never been a member of the Communist Party and

Kisseloff-23392

never had been a member of the Socialist Party. In an effort to determine whether this was a factual statement or not, the voting records during the time Priscilla Hiss was a resident of New York City were checked. These records showed that on October 14, 1932 Priscilla Hiss, residing at 547 West 123rd Street, New York City, registered giving as her voting preference Socialist. Even when confronted with a certified photostatic copy of this voting registration, she coyly denied in evasive double talk that she had so registered. She testified, however, that she distinctly remembered voting for Norman Thomas in 1932.

THE WOODSTOCK TYPEWRITER

In an effort to prove that the Woodstock typewriter was not in the possession of the Hisses during the period from January through March, 1938, the defense called as a witness one Mike Catlett, the son of a former Hiss maid. Mike Catlett testified that as youths he and his brothers did odd jobs for the Hisses and that in the course of one of the moves made by the Hisses they had given to him a battered upright typewriter. He identified the Woodstock typewriter produced by the defense as the machine given to him. The defense attempted to imply that the move referred to by Mike Catlett was a move made in December of 1937 by the Hisses from P Street to the Volta Place house. However, Mike Catlett

had been interviewed on previous occasions by agents of the Washington Field Office and had furnished a signed statement indicating that within a week after his receipt of the typewriter from the Hisses he had brought it for purposes of repair to a Woodstock typewriter shop located at the intersection of K Street and Connecticut Avenue in Washington, D.C. Catlett reiterated this statement on the witness stand, and the Government thereafter produced the lease for this Woodstock typewriter company which indicated that the premises at K Street and Connecticut Avenue were not occupied by the Woodstock people until September 1, 1938.

Efforts were then made by the defense to show that Mike Catlett might have taken the typewriter to a previous location occupied by the Woodstock people in the immediate vicinity of K Street and Connecticut Avenue. However, rental records for this location were produced by the Government which showed conclusively that the alternate location had in fact been occupied only from May through July, 1938. The obvious conclusion was that Catlett had received the typewriter from the Hisses some time subsequent to April, 1938, and that this immutable piece of evidence was in possession of Alger and Priscilla Hiss in January, February and March, 1938, the pertinent period of this inquiry.

Kisseloff-23394

EXPERT TESTIMONY

During the first trial of Alger Hiss a Special Agent document examiner from the Laboratory testified at length concerning his examinations and conclusions relative to the typewriting and handwriting specimens that were introduced at the trial. This agent testified that the typewriting appearing on the Bryn Mawr alumni report, the Landon School letter, and Priscilla Hiss' letter to the University of Maryland was identical with the typewriting appearing on the 64 typewritten documents concerning State Department material. At the conclusion of this witness' testimony he was not cross-examined.

In the second trial this witness again testified, and although he was not cross-examined with respect to the handwriting and typewriting characters, he was examined about his ability to state the age and type of the paper in the Baltimore documents. To add some mystery to the age of the paper, the defense obtained a court order permitting them to obtain a portion of the original documents allegedly for examination as to age, texture, and source or origin. Oddly enough, although they procured such a sample and presumably had such an examination conducted, no testimony was introduced by the defense concerning the age or origin of the paper in the Baltimore documents.

During both trials considerable testimony was given by defense witnesses indicating that the Woodstock typewriter

was in a state of disrepair. At the second trial, a Special Agent of the New York Office was called to the witness stand, given one of the Baltimore papers, and was requested to type it out. He stepped to the exhibit table, and with the typewriter produced by the defense calmly typed out an exact copy of this document as if he had been using a typewriter just out of the factory.

FELIX INSLERMAN

During the interrogation of Chambers prior to the first trial the latter had stated that the documents which he procured from Alger Hiss had been photographed by a resident of Baltimore known only to Chambers as Felix. He did recall, however, that Felix lived on Gallow Avenue in Baltimore, and further recalled that at one time he was an employee of an electrical appliance store. Chambers was also able to give a rather vague description of Felix's residence in view of the fact that he had driven Felix to the front of his house on one occasion. With this scanty information, agents of the Baltimore Office conducted an extensive neighborhood investigation in the vicinity of Gallow Avenue, and with additional information obtained from a 1937 Baltimore city directory, were able to ascertain that a Felix Inslerman who had resided in 1937 on Gallow Avenue was once an employee of an electrical appliance shop in downtown Baltimore. Further investigation of Inslerman developed the fact that he was now a resident of Cambridge, New York, and an employee in the Engineering Department of the

Kisseloff-23396

General Electric plant at Schenectady, New York. A photograph of Inslerman was obtained and exhibited to Chambers who immediately identified it as Felix the photographer.

Subsequent investigation of Inslerman at New York City, where he had once resided, developed that for a period of two years prior to his departure for Baltimore he had enrolled as a member of the Communist Party with his local election board.

Inslerman was interviewed by Agents of the Albany Office and denied knowing Chambers or having acted in the manner outlined by Chambers. In the course of the interview, however, he admitted that he was the owner of a Leica camera which he claimed had been purchased by his wife at Washington, D.C., in 1937 on the occasion of his birthday. This Leica camera was turned over to the FBI Laboratory in Washington for examination. Test shots were exposed in this camera and enlarged prints were prepared. These prints in turn were compared with enlarged prints prepared from the Pumpkin microfilm. The border of these prints disclosed identical microscopic marks left by the edge of the mask of this Leica camera. As a result of these tests, the Laboratory concluded that the pumpkin microfilm had been exposed on the Leica camera owned by Felix Inslerman

Kisseloff-23397

Records maintained by E. Leitz and Company, American distributors of the Leica camera, clearly established the ownership of this camera by Inslerman during the period in 1937-38 as stated by Chambers. In the first trial the Laboratory expert was sworn and was about to testify to these conclusions when Hiss' attorneys agreed by stipulation as to the testimony that would be given by this witness. In the second trial, however, no such concession was granted by Claude Cross, the new chief attorney for Alger Hiss, and a Special Agent from the Laboratory testified in detail concerning his examinations, findings, and conclusions.

3415 Volta Place

In the testimony of Alger and Priscilla Hiss at both the first and second trials, when interrogated about the withdrawal of the \$400.00 from their joint savings account on November 13, 1937, they stated it was used for making purchases for the Volta Place house. They both explained that the Volta Place residence was larger than the house they were then living in on P Street and of necessity needed more furnishings. Both related that as of November 19, 1937, the Volta Place residence was vacant, and that as these purchases of furnishings, rugs, and other material were made, they were delivered directly to the Volta Place residence where they were stored until such time as they moved all of their belongings to that location.

Kisseloff-23398

The lessor of the premises at 3415 Volta Place, Mrs. Catherine Flannigan, was determined to be deceased, and efforts to locate her daughter, Mrs. Gladys Tally, met with no success. However, just prior to the commencement of the second trial Mrs. Tally was located in St. Louis. She told agents of the St. Louis Office, and later testified at the trial, that she was quite sure that there was no furniture in the Volta Place residence, at least as of December 5, 1937. She related that she recalled placing an ad in the "Washington Post" describing the Volta Place residence and indicating it was for rent.

A review of the Washington newspaper files in the Library of Congress reflected an advertisement for the Volta Place house that was in the December 5, 1937, issue of the "Washington Post". Mrs. Tally also recalled that she and a friend were at the house all day on December 5, and oddly enough was able to produce a photograph of herself and her friend taken in the Volta Place residence. Both of them were sitting on the floor when the photograph was taken. She testified that there was no furniture in the Volta Place house on December 5, 1937, and further that as of that date she had made no commitments for renting the Volta Place house to the Hiss family, and stated it was definitely some time after December 5th and the end of December that final

Kisseloff-23399

negotiations were entered into for the rental of this residence to the Alger Hiss family. This was another point bearing on the veracity of Alger and Priscilla Hiss as compared with independent witnesses and documentary evidence.

Kisseloff-23400